Registration of Trade Unions

†* 359. SHRI P.K. MAHESHWARI: Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether in view of the incident of Gurgaon, Government are considering to make changes in the labour laws;

(b) the details of the existing law regarding registration of 'trade unions', and the steps being taken by Government to make the registration mandatory; and

(c) whether Government have any information about the number of trade unions of the employees working in multinational companies?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI K. CHANDRA SHEKHAR RAO): (a) to (c) Review of labour laws is a continuous process. Amendments are proposed after detailed consultation with the social partners with a view to harmonize the interests of all the stakeholders.

The Trade Unions Act, 1926 provides for mode of registration of trade unions under the Act. No trade union of workmen shall be registered unless at least 10 per cent of 100, whichever is less, subject to a minimum of seven workmen engaged or employed in the establishment or industry with which it is connected are the members of such trade unions on the date of making of application for registration. The Trade Unions Act was last amended in 2001. At present, there is no proposal to further amend the Act to make the registration of trade unions mandatory.

The Trade Unions Act, 1926, is administered by the State Governments. The information about the number of trade unions of the employees working in multinational companies is not centrally maintained.

Outsourcing of Research and Development

*360. SHRI MOOLCHAND MEENA: DR. T SUBBARAMI REDDY:

Will the Minister of SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(a) whether the integration of India and China into global economy and consequent increase in outsourcing of research and development to these nations have not only made revolutionary impact on the cost of drug development in west but also helped reshape domestic industries in both the nations;

(b) whether as per the recent findings in the 19th Annual Global Biotechnology report, India and China are improving their regulatory systems; and

(c) to what extent both countries have agreed to play a greater role in Biotechnology?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (SHRI KAPIL SIBAL): (a) to (c) Sir, with ever-increasing cost of drug development in the West, it has become difficult for companies to sell drugs based on the cost of Research and Development and clinical trials. The pharmaceuticals companies have to recover the cost of drug discovery and, therefore, have to price the drugs at levels, which are unaffordable even to the middle class in USA and Europe. Also it is a burden on the state exchequer due to the increasing cost of social security benefits. Spiralling costs in R&D and drug development have made USA and European countries look towards outsourcing in India and China by establishing their R&D centers and conducting clinical trials in these countries. This provides a great opportunity for India. By liberalizing the environment for such investments, they will have a positive impact on the domestic pharmaceutical industry. With Patent Act, 1970 in place and protection given to product patents Indian pharmaceuticals companies also have to compete and survive in the international market through innovations. India is already a large exporter of generics and more and more companies in India are investing in drug discovery and development. The revolutionary impact on nations outsourcing R&D, especially in India and China will be seen in the years to come depending on the response of the Indian Pharmaceutical companies and the opportunities available to large pharmaceuticals companies in the world with the ever-changing liberalized environment for partnerships with such companies both in India and China.

India needs to change its regulatory framework to achieve efficiency,

world-class standards for clinical trials and establish a professionalized multi-disciplinary regulatory body dealing with contemporary biotech and pharma issues. With the new Biotech Development Strategy under discussion all the challenges including putting in place an effective regulatory system are sought to be met. The biotech industry has already achieved an annual turnover of $ 1 billion and destined to leap forward as a sizable section of the Industry is ready to meet the challenges of global competition required to be met pursuant to the amendments in 2005 and earlier amendment in 1970 the India Patent Act, including granting product protection. The large skilled human resource base available in India for which India is uniquely placed coupled with low cost economy can help shape the nature of domestic industry and pave the way for India to capture a larger market share of the global drug and biotech industry. The same logic with some variables also applies to China. As per the published Global Biotechnology Report 2004 "Beyond Borders", of Earnest and Young, both India and China are positioned to take advantage of moves by Governments in the US and Europe to create a regulatory framework for approving generic versions of successful protein drugs, whose patent is expiring in the near future.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO UNSTARRED QUESTIONS

Employment under PMRY

†2504. SHRI PYARELAL KHANDELWAL: Will the Minister of AGRO AND RURAL INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) the number of unemployed youths who have been provided loan under Pradhan Mantri Rozgar Yojana during the last three years;

(b) whether any target has been fixed to make loans available during this period; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF AGRO AND RURAL INDUSTRIES (SHRI MAHAVIR PRASAD): (a) to (c) The details of targets and number of unemployed

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.